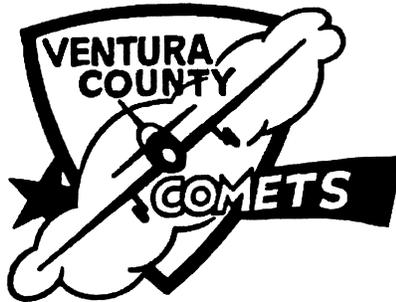


The Comets' Tale

*The Official
Newsletter of the*



January 2012

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The Comets' Tale is the official newsletter and record of the Ventura County
Comets, AMA Chartered Club #173 and is published monthly at the Comets'
Tale Plaza, somewhere in Ventura.

Next Meeting:
**Thursday, 19 January, at the
Oak View Community Center**

Coming Up!



Mon., 20 Feb.

Indoor Electric Fly, Simi
Valley Recreation Center
7:30 PM

Sat., Sun., 21, 22 APRIL

Comets Float Fly, Lake
Casitas

First Sunday of Every Month

Open House at Santa Paula
Airport

From the President

Happy New Year everybody. Hope Santa was good to you and you got all the goodies on your wish list? Well, it's now 2012, and time continues to race by. It's hard to believe that 2011 is already behind us. It was a great year for the Comets. We had two great Float Flies in April and October, with excellent attendance, and held a lot of fun events (balloon drop, war bird fun fly, electric fly, etc.) throughout the spring and fall. This year should be every bit as good, and just as much fun as last year.

However, there are some challenging issues to address this coming year that we all need to engage. Probably first and foremost is the rapidly deteriorating blacktop on both the runway and the taxi areas. I know that most of you will say, "Hey we just had the place blacktopped a little over a year ago", and that's true, but the reality is the top continues peel up, not to mention all the cracks and ridges.

The second issue is the lack of members willing to run for elected office. This past year no one would volunteer to run for the offices of President and Field Marshal/Safety Officer. Consequently, both myself, and Mike Ambarian volunteered to extend our terms for one additional year, which is permitted in our Bylaws. However, next year, or more correctly this year we must elect a

new President, Field Marshal/Safety Officer, Secretary and Treasurer. My challenge to all of you that have not served as an elected officer is to consider submitting your name to serve in one of these positions. The health and long term viability of this club is directly dependent volunteers to serve as elected officers. I can answer any questions you may have regarding duties, time spent and responsibilities associated with these positions. Because of the volunteer spirit of our membership, and the sharing of duties within the elected offices, on average I spend no more than a couple of hours a month on tasks associated with serving as your president. Believe me it's not that onerous or time consuming serving as an elected officer.

Don't forget that the January meeting is set for the 19th at 7:30 PM. The flying weather has been outstanding for the past month, so if you haven't been out, charge them batteries, fill the fuel can and get out to the field! Take care, and safe flying.

George Boston

Root's Rambling

A group of us attended the AMA trade show last weekend. We had a good time, bought a few things, and looked at the neat models. I will include a few pictures I took of some of the interesting models on display.

The first two pictures are a Curtiss F8C-4 Helldiver model and some of the information about it.



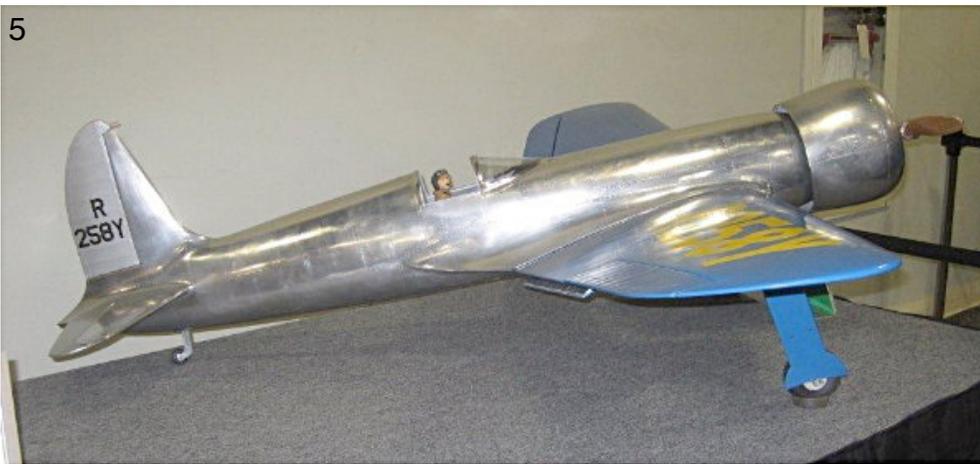


3

My favorite model at the show is shown in pictures 3 and 4. It is a Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat.



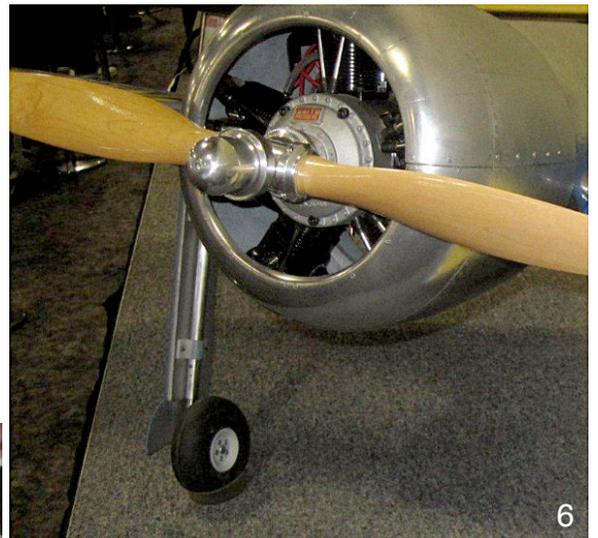
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5

Pictures 5 and 6 show a model of the racer which was raced by Howard Hughes.

This model has an 80 in. wingspan and weighs 16 pounds. Another model of this airplane is shown in picture 7. This one was used in the Howard Hughes movie and weighs more than 120 Lb.



6



7



8

The C-130E shown in picture 8 is a very nice-looking model which was made by stripping the US Coast Guard colors off of a Hobby People ARF kit and repainted it. The model is powered by four OS25FX engines and weighs 16 pounds.

Another nicely finished model is the A-10 shown in picture 9. The surface detail seemed to have been accomplished with paint only.



9



10

Everyone knows I am partial to Spitfires. The MK IX in picture 10 was very detailed, down to the landing gear down indicating door on top of the wing in front of the flap.

The last model (picture 11) is an early 50's R/C design kitted by Midwest models called the Esquire. In those days it was usually controlled by the rudder only. The rudder was driven by a rubber band powered escapement.



11



12

A couple of weeks ago TJ Moran brought out the new large Pitts model 12 which is shown in pictures 12, 13, and 14. He had updated the controls after a couple of earlier less than ideal flights.



It seemed to fly very well now.



However, he misjudged the approach to landing and hit a bush as can be seen in my last picture (15).

Now is the time to be out flying. The weather has been beautiful the last couple of weeks. Come on out and enjoy your beautiful flying field.

Minutes of the December 2011 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:02. President George welcomed us to the Christmas party/meeting. He acknowledged the club's staff: Vice President Marilyn, Treasurer T.J and the secretary, me. But more importantly he made a point to acknowledge a couple guys that don't have the fame and fortune of sitting at the table in the front of the room. Those folks are Jerry Deanda for all the work on the newsletter, and Bob Root for his monthly Root's Ramblings (hey, he calls it that).

President George reminded the group that Ken Marsh is stepping away from his duties as Park Liaison after the many, many years that he has put in with this position and his involvement with the club. George made a motion that we add Ken's name to the William B. Gast award. The motion was approved. FYI John Dugan will take over the Park Liaison's duties. We told the tale of who was in what position last month, right?

President George sent us to the buffet tables, with thanks for putting in the time and attending this evening's meeting and festivities.

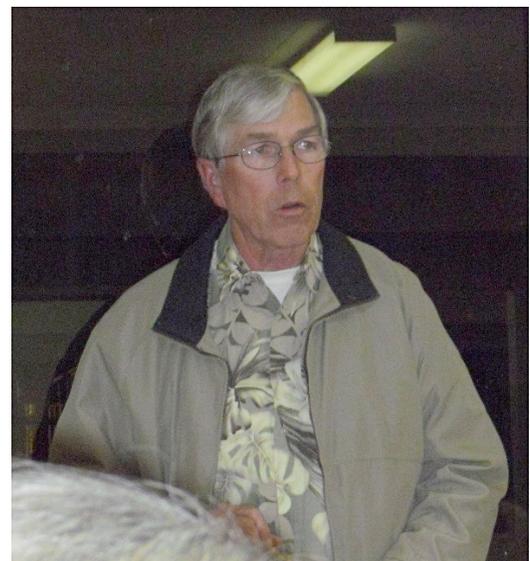
The business part of the meeting adjourned at 7:12

Then the eating and the stories began. There seemed to be a lot of food. The evening ended with a raffle. Some nice prizes were won.

Hope the holidays went well for everyone,

Respectfully Submitted,

Alastair Brennan



Congratulations are in order for Comet member Larry Snarr, who soloed his Goldberg Eaglet on Friday, December 30, 2011. The weather cooperated with a beautiful, calm, Southern California morning.
Good job, Larry!

RANDUMB THOTS :-) Well, here's hoping you got everything you wanted for Christmas. I hope you asked for clear skies, calm winds, thermals, reliable engines, rubber propellers that don't bite, unlimited length runways, soft ground for hard landings, minimal FAA intervention in our sport (I guess no intervention is too much to ask), and stuff like that.

Wife Dianne and I have acquired another airplane, a Cessna 150. A friend made us an offer we weren't allowed to refuse and so now we have this 150. It's a 150D, one of only two years they made the 150 with the back window and the unswept "square" vertical tail. It's a very straight airframe, appears it was never a trainer. Paint is pretty good, and it even has a cartoon bird on the tail designed by Matt Jeffries... he's the guy who designed the starship Enterprise, which I think is deeply cool. We've named the airplane Jimmy, after the original owner, a great friend.

We're not sure what we'll be doing with it yet. It needs some work, the propeller pitch needs to be tweaked and maybe there will be a propeller overhaul in there, too. There is still some roughness in the engine that is a concern. We made one very short flight around the pattern and we will need to fix that roughness before we fly again. It's a bit of a mystery since it runs fine on the ground. I have some good help on this and we'll figure it out.

Over the break between Christmas and New Years, we did a lot of flying in Lola the RV-6. I made a solo run to Bullhead City (OK, Laughlin) to get Dianne after she'd driven her Dad home. It was a great trip, about an hour and 50 minutes, hardly a bump to be felt. Spent the night there and then Dianne and I came home together. We made a short stop at Daggett, near Barstow and traded seats. Santa Paula was just a short hop from there. We zoomed up to Big Bear for lunch one day and that was kind of educational as I'd never been there. We arrived to find snow around the valley and about a quarter of the lake frozen. Lunch at the airport cafe was great.

When we left, look what we found on the ramp next to Lola... this Marchetti Riviera. If you've been paying attention to the Mystery Planes in this publication, you may remember Bob Root submitted some photos, drawings and info on this airplane. So now here was one I could walk around and examine. It was in pretty good shape although the cockpit and instrument panel looked like they were the same as it came out of the factory. It even had the old-timey WWII AN-type gyros and an ADF, of all things. Unfortunately, the pilot didn't come out until we were taxiing for takeoff, so I didn't get a chance to ask any questions. Still, the airplane looked well cared for and it was fun to see one.



Jerry